

Serial No.: 10/743,668

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A suture locking device comprising:
a longitudinal retaining member having first and second ends;
a support member having first and second asymmetric recesses that are diametrically opposite to each other and have center points that are coaxial,
where the first and second ends of the retaining member are releasably positioned within the first and second recesses of the support member.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the support member has a geometric or arcuate shape.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the support member has an arcuate shape and a geometric cross section.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the support member has a rectangular shape and a geometric cross section.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the retaining member has a geometric cross section.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the retaining member has an opening that extends from the surface of the retaining member to an inner point on the retaining member.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 6 where the width of the opening is sized to permit entrance of at least one surgical suture.

Serial No.: 10/743,668

Claim 8 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the recesses on the support member are geometrically shaped.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the recesses on the support member are non-circular.

Claim 10 (canceled)

Claim 11 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the recesses on the support member are keyed.

Claim 12 (canceled)

Claim 13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the centerpoints of the first and second recesses are coaxial

Claim 16 (previously presented): The suture locking device of claim 1 where the support member has at least two angled surfaces.

Claim 17 (canceled)

Claim 18 (previously presented): A method of closing an incision, comprising the steps of:

- a) suturing the incision with a suture to form a closed incision;
- b) introducing the portion of the suture that remains at the final suture exit from the tissue surface, to a longitudinal retaining member having first and second ends;

Serial No.: 10/743,668

- c) wrapping the suture around the retaining member by rotating the retaining member in the direction of the closed incision;
- d) guiding the retaining member along the path formed by the suture to the closed incision;
- e) positioning the first and second ends of the retaining member in first and second recesses of a support member, where the first and second recesses are diametrically opposite to each other and have center points that are coaxial, to form a suture locking device where the retaining member and support member define a free area, such that the final suture exit is bounded by or is adjacent to the free area.

Claim 19 (new): A suture locking device comprising:
a longitudinal retaining member having first and second ends, where the first and second ends are non-circular;
a support member having first and second recesses that are diametrically opposite to each other and have center points that are coaxial,
where the first and second ends of the retaining member are releasably positioned within the first and second recesses of the support member.

Claim 20 (new): A suture locking device comprising:
a longitudinal retaining member having first and second ends, where the first and second ends have asymmetric cross sections;
a support member having first and second recesses that are diametrically opposite to each other and have center points that are coaxial,
where the first and second ends of the retaining member are releasably positioned within the first and second recesses of the support member.

Claim 21 (new): A suture locking device comprising:
a longitudinal retaining member having first and second keyed ends;
a support member having first and second recesses that are diametrically opposite to each other and have center points that are coaxial,
where the first and second ends of the retaining member are releasably positioned within the first and second recesses of the support member.